

Serial No. 10/730,512

Atty. Docket 29617/37215B

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the two paragraphs beginning at page 7, line 15, with the following paragraphs:

Figure 2 shows a stylized cross-sectional view of the marker 10 of Figure 1, illustrating functional components of the instrument. The marker 10 includes a housing 26 (e.g., provided by an exterior wall 30). A reservoir 32 for storing a free ink 36 34 is within the housing 26. The term "free ink" is defined a liquid ink that can be stored in a cavity (e.g., a reservoir) and that is free to move or flow in responses to external forces (e.g., motion, gravity, and pressure). A user may view such free ink in a column of a writing instrument (e.g., a portion of the reservoir) to determine how much ink is available for use.

A non-porous feed tube 36 provides an open channel 38 in fluid communication with the reservoir 32 as an extension of the reservoir 32 for transferring ink 34 from the reservoir 32, through the tip 40 to its marking or writing end 42. A lower section 44 of the feed tube 36 is adapted to receive a butt end 46 of the tip 40, which extends a portion of the length of the feed tube 36. The feed tube 36 has an adapter 50 at a section 52 of the feed tube 36 nearest the reservoir. A plenum (shown as a head 54) of the adapter 44 separates the reservoir 32 from a lower section 56 of the marker 10 and secures the feed tube 36. A buffer 60 surrounds the feed tube 36 and at least a portion of the tip 40 (see Figures 2 and 3) to provide capillary coupling between the tip 40 and the buffer 60.

Please replace the two paragraphs beginning at page 9, line 11, with the following paragraphs:

In the embodiment of the invention depicted in Figure 2, the butt end 46 of the tip 40 has a first diameter 70 and the middle section 64 (and, optionally, lower section 72) of the tip 40 has a second, larger, diameter 74, but this need not be the case. Thus, as in the embodiment depicted in Figure 5, a tip 140 can have a substantially uniform diameter 76, which provides a passage 66 (not labeled) between a butt end 146 of the tip 140 and the feed tube 36. For example, the butt end 146 of the tip 140 is not engaged in

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interference fit with the feed tube 36, but instead a degree of clearance is present. In such a case, the tip 140 extends a portion of the length of the feed tube 36 and preferably is prevented from ascending further up into the feed tube 36, or from coming out of the feed tube 36 by being physically secured, such as by the combination of a circumferential notch 78 in the tip 140 and a corresponding ridge 90 in the housing 26, or by other means. In addition, in the case of this embodiment employing a tip 140, a buffer 160 is adapted to be in capillary communication with the tip 140 in the vicinity of a tip end 192 of the buffer 160 to ensure that the ink can move from the tip 140 to the buffer 160 and from the buffer 160 to the tip 140. Preferably, a molded material can provide the desired contact between the buffer 160 and tip 140.

Referring to Figure 2, when the tip 40 has a butt end 46 with a first diameter 70 and a middle section 64 (and, optionally, lower section 72) of the tip 40 with a second, larger, diameter 74, the middle section 64 has a ridge (shown as a shoulder 94) that is located proximate the lower section 44 of the feed tube 36. The butt end 46 of the tip 40 extends from the shoulder 94 to a predetermined distance up into the feed tube 36 (shown in Figures 2 and 4 as a portion of the length of the feed tube 36). The middle section 64 of the tip 40 extends from the shoulder 94 to the lowermost end of the buffer 60, and the lower section 72 of the tip 40 extends from the lowermost end of the buffer 60 to the marking end 42, which is used to contact a substrate for delivery of ink.